CROYDON PHILATELIC SOCIETY:
NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 12TH FEBRUARY 2019:

President Graham Harker opened the meeting at 19.30 hours and welcomed the 20 members present. The meeting was billed as the **President's Evening** and President Graham entitled his display **"All Things Brunel".**

President Graham with an interest in the life and works of the engineer **Isambard Kingdom Brunel** showed a power point presentation which began with how Brunel was linked to Croydon through designing and building the water towers for the Crystal Palace when it was moved from Hyde Park to Sydenham. This was followed by details of his early life and then at the age of 16 beginning to work with his father Sir Mark Brunel, also an engineer. One of the first projects involving Isambard was the Thames Tunnel which is still in use by the London over ground railway from

Rotherhithe to Wapping. Aspects of the Great Western Railway were then covered for which Brunel was the appointed engineer followed by a section on the Great Western Air Service established in the West Country. The first half ended with reference to the Clifton Suspension Bridge.

Following refreshments the second part of the evening continued the power point presentation focussing on Brunel's ships – SS Great Western, SS Great Britain and the SS Great Eastern. The display material of the SS Great Western contained many ship letters carried across the Atlantic Ocean whilst the section on the SS Great Britain covered the history of the ship including its rescue from the Falkland Islands in 1970 and its restoration in Bristol where it can now be visited. The Brunel Archive has also been sited in a specially built structure on the dockside beside the SS Great Britain.

In conclusion, Brunel's achievements during his relatively short life of 53 years (1806-1859) were outlined along with his personal characteristics. Both power point presentations were supported by displays which included stamps, (unused and used), postal history, photographs and other ephemera.

The meeting closed at 21.30 hours and members seemed to have found an exploration of Brunel's life and work of interest.

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Graham Harker